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REMARKS

ON A

PAMPHLET LATELY PUBLISHED BY DR. PRICE,

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INTITLED,

OBSERVATIONS on the NATURE of CIVIL LIBERTY, the PRINCIPLES of GOVERNMENT, and the JUSTICE and POLICY of the WAR with AMERICA, *&c.*

IN A

LETTER from a GENTLEMAN in the Country to a MEMBER of PARLIAMENT.

LONDON:

PRINTRD FOR T. CADELL IN THE STRAND.
MDCCLXXVI.

REMARKS

ON A

PAMPHLET LATELY PUBLISHED BY DR. PRICE.

In a Letter to a Member of Parliament.

SIR,

I SEND you ſome Remarks upon Dr. Price's Pamphlet, concerning which you do me the honour to deſire my opinion. A gentleman who gives his name to the Public is intitled to have the faireſt conſtruction put upon his words, and I ſhall be extremely ſorry if, in differing from Dr. Price, any expreſſion eſcape from me that is too abrupt for the reſpect that is due to him. As I am a mere commentator, I am likely to be as dull as the reſt of my fraternity, but ſhall, nevertheleſs, abide by the order, and confine myſelf to the matter, that is ſuggeſted by my Author.

You will pleaſe to obſerve, that the Doctor reſts his argument on a definition of Civil Liberty, which is therefore a principal ſubject of theſe Remarks. He conſiders Liberty under four general diviſions, *Phyſical Liberty*, *Moral Liberty*, *Religious Liberty*, and *Civil Liberty* *. The firſt is the *principle of ſpontaneity*. The ſecond is the *power of following our own ſenſe of right and wrong*. The third, the *power of exerciſing the religion we like beſt*. And the fourth, or Civil Liberty, is the *power of a civil ſociety or ſtate to govern itſelf by its own diſcretion*.

The Doctor, in the following inference from all theſe definitions collated together, puts Liberty in contradiſtinction to Reſtraint, and makes Reſtraint, in every caſe, the eſſence of Slavery. "In all theſe caſes, he ſays, *there is a force which ſtands oppoſed to the agent's own will, and which, as far as it operates, produces ſervitude*. And he concludes the whole deduction with obſerving, that *as far as in any inſtance the operation of any cauſe comes in to reſtrain the power of ſelf-government, ſo far ſlavery is introduced. Nor do I think*, he adds, *that a preciſer idea than this of Liberty and Slavery can be formed*.

* Sect. I. p. 2.

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I am under the neceſſity, however, of owning, that this idea is ſomewhat perplexing to me. It does not appear, that upon this idea of Liberty any civil community can be formed without introducing ſlavery. For even where the collective body are ſovereigns, they are ſeldom unanimous, and the minority muſt ever ſubmit to a power that ſtands oppoſed to their own will.

In this, however, the loſs of Liberty may be ſuppoſed unavoidable; for it is common to ſay, that men, by entering into ſociety, give up a part of their Natural Liberty.

But there is yet another difficulty. If Liberty be oppoſed to Reſtraint, I am afraid it is inconſiſtent with the great end of civil government itſelf, which is to give people ſecurity from the effect of crimes and diſorders, and to preſerve the peace of mankind.

The Liberty of any ſingle man, in this ſenſe of a freedom from reſtraint, would be the ſervitude of all. In Turkey, perhaps in Brandenburgh, there are perſons who pretend to this Liberty; but I believe that no one can deviſe a more plentiful ſource of ſlavery than this. The Liberty of every ſeparate diſtrict or corporation in a ſtate would be national independence; and as

far as the humour for it ſhould ſpread, would threaten every community with the loſs of every incorporated member that has a pretence for ſeparation, or a fancy to ſet up for itſelf.

I confeſs I am ſomewhat ſurpriſed that Dr. Price, who quotes Monteſquieu with ſo much regard on other occaſions, ſhould have overlooked what he has ſaid on this. Among the other miſtaken notions of Liberty, this celebrated writer obſerves, *That ſome have confounded the Power of the people with the Liberty of the people*. That in democracies the people ſeem to do what they pleaſe; but that Liberty does not conſiſt in doing what we pleaſe. It conſiſts in being free to do what we ought to incline, and in not being obliged to do what we ought not to incline†. We ought to remember*, he continues, *that Independence is one thing, and Liberty another. That if any citizen were free to do what he pleaſed, this would be an extinction of Liberty, for every one elſe would have the ſame freedom‡.*

If the Doctor perſiſt in his definition of Civil Liberty, it will be difficult to ſupport the high encomium which he beſtows upon it. For it would be a real curſe to numbers of mankind

* L'Eſprit des Loix, livre ii. c. 2.
† Ibid. c. 3. ‡ Ibid.

to

to be left to do what they pleaſe. Certain inſtances we have had of this Liberty in the caſe of deſpotic princes, who were taught to think that they had a right to do what they pleaſed; but they were, in conſequence of this Liberty, the completeſt wretches that have appeared in the hiſtory of mankind.

Whether we ſay or no with Monteſquieu, that the power of the people is not the liberty of the people, it may be ſaid with confidence, that the power of the people is not the happineſs of the people. Corrupt and vicious men, aſſembled in great bodies, cannot have a greater curſe beſtowed upon them, than the power of governing themſelves.

It is poſſible that the Doctor may have meant to qualify his definition and the encomium of Civil Liberty, by ſuppoſing, that it was preceded by Moral Liberty; and if he did, this would be rather an aukward way of informing us, that Liberty conſiſts in the freedom to do what is juſt and innocent. In the mean time, and till Moral Liberty is fully eſtabliſhed in the world, we ſhall do well to prepare ſome reſtraint for the inclinations of men, and be contented with a Liberty which ſecures to us the poſſeſſion of our rights, while it reſtrains us from invading the rights of others.

Here, however, I am obliged to look forward ſome pages *, and muſt confeſs, that the Doctor himſelf has qualified his deſcription of Liberty in ſome ſuch manner as this: *A free ſtate*, he ſays, *at the ſame time that it is free itſelf, makes all its members free, by excluding licentiouſneſs, and guarding their perſons and property and good name againſt inſult.* That is to ſay, when we bring together the two parts of the Doctor's deſcription, that a free ſtate produces ſervitude, to produce Liberty. Or, as he concludes the paragraph himſelf, that *Government reſtrains Liberty, when uſed to deſtroy Liberty.*

This colliſion of words, I confeſs, renders the preciſion of the Doctor's former idea ſomewhat ſuſpicious; but we muſt be contented with the good meaning, and only regret, that the qualification of the general definition had not come ſooner, and that it is not more uniformly kept in view through the piece. If a writer ſhould inſiſt, that the inhabitants of St. Giles's have a right to ſeize the houſes in Groſvenor Square, and afterwards, upon a difficulty ſtated, ſhould qualify his doctrine by ſaying, that he affirmed the right only on a ſuppoſition that they had

* Page 12 and 13.

bought

bought the ſubjects in queſtion, and had paid for them, his doctrine might be true on the whole; but his manner of ſtating it, by leaving out ſo important a condition till it was required to ſolve an objection, eſpecially if he dropt it, afterwards through the whole of his argument might appear ſomewhat exceptionable. It is probable that ſome of the parties concerned would be in ſuch haſte to avail themſelves of the right, that they would not ſtay to think of the condition. And I apprehend with ſome regret, that the Doctor may have readers who will reaſon on his definition of Liberty, and think themſelves entitled to do what they pleaſe, without attending to the qualification that is afterwards brought to explain it.

My impatience to have a ſatisfactory account of this important ſubject, by collating together the deſcriptions and limitations of my Author, has carried me a few pages too faſt; I think myſelf now, however, authoriſed to conclude with the conſent of the Doctor, that Civil Liberty is not preciſely a power to do what we pleaſe, but the ſecurity of our rights; and that a perſon may be free, although contrary to his own will he is obliged to pay his debts, and even to contribute to the revenue of the ſtate. And if the Doctor inſiſts that Liberty ſtill implies

a freedom

a freedom from reſtraint, he will pleaſe to obſerve, that nothing can give a more complete freedom from unjuſt reſtraint, than the perfect ſecurity that we cannot be wronged. This is the freedom which Monteſquieu holds forth to our eſteem; and I preſume, it is that Liberty on which Dr. Price beſtows his encomium, notwithſtanding his apparent partiality to the freedom of doing what we pleaſe. I now return to the place at which I met my Author *.

The Doctor, in every ſtep of his argument, is ſomewhat hurried by his own definition. *In every free ſtate*, he ſays, *every man is his own legiſlator: all taxes are free gifts for public ſervices.* It may be fair to aſk in what part of the world ſuch a ſtate does, or ever did exiſt? Or what ſort of laws thieves and pickpockets are likely to make againſt theft? Or how much of his property the miſer is likely to bring to the coffers of the Public?

In moſt free ſtates the populace have as much need to be guarded againſt the effect of their own folly and errors, as againſt the uſurpation of any other perſon whatever. And the eſſence of political Liberty is ſuch an eſtabliſh-

* Page 4.

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ment as gives power to the wiſe, and ſafety to all. The exerciſe of power in popular aſſemblies has a mixture of effects, good and bad. It teaches a people, as it did the Athenians, to become wits, critics, and orators. It gives to every man one chance againſt being oppreſſed, in allowing him to appear for himſelf. But it places him when accuſed before raſh, precipitate, prejudiced, and inequitable judges; he is no more his own legiſlator, than he is the maſter of the people. And he is in fact ſubject to a power, which is of all others the moſt unſtable, capricious, and arbitrary: bound by no law, and ſubject to no appeal. For this reaſon, Mr. Monteſquieu has very wiſely ſaid, that Democracy and Ariſtocracy are not by their nature free governments *.

They are inferior in this reſpect to certain ſpecies of monarchy, where law is more fixed and the abuſes of power are better reſtrained.

The Doctor farther obſerves †, or concludes, from his definition, *that Civil Liberty in the moſt perfect degree can be enjoyed only in ſmall ſtates, where every member is capable of giving his ſuffrage in perſon, and of being choſen* into public

* Eſprit des Loix, liv. ix. c. 5. † Page 7.

offices. It is true that democracy is tolerable only in ſmall ſtates; and the Doctor certainly means to ſpeak of democracy, when he makes this inference on the ſubject of Liberty. But even in the ſmalleſt ſtates, the preſervation of public conſiſtency and juſtice, the ſecurity of private rights, muſt ever recommend ſome mixture of ariſtocratical power, that may prove a check on the caprice of the people; and ſuch a mixture took place in all the happieſt inſtitutions of antiquity.

The Doctor owns *, that although Liberty be moſt perfect in ſmall ſtates, it is not altogether baniſhed from great ones: For, *where all the members of a ſtate are not capable of giving their ſuffrages on public meaſures individually and perſonally, they may do this by the appointment of ſubſtitutes or repreſentatives.*

In this conceſſion, the Doctor begins to elude the force of his own definition; and when we conſider how little in ſome caſes the conſtituent may know of what his repreſentative does, it appears, that by this device, men may be their own legiſlators, without ſo much as knowing that laws are enacted or propoſed. And even

* Page 7.

America,

America, at the diſtance of three thouſand miles of ſea, may enjoy its freedom by ſending ſubſtitutes or repreſentatives to the Parliament of Great Britain.

This indeed is one of the happieſt inſtitutions of mankind, and might be of uſe in ſmall as well as in great ſtates, by giving every order of the people that ſhare in the legiſlature of their country, which is neceſſary to guard their own rights, without enabling them to uſurp on the rights of others. But I muſt ſtill contend, that the Liberty of every claſs and order is not proportioned to the power they enjoy, but to the ſecurity they have for the preſervation of their rights.

In ſtating this fortunate principle however, the Doctor very reaſonably recommends a fair and adequate repreſentation, and makes ſuch a deſcription of pretended inadequate repreſentation, as I am afraid can hardly fail of being applied to the government of Great Britain *. The repreſentatives of ſeven millions are choſen by leſs than three hundred thouſand, and the whole is attended with circumſtances that make the Doctor exclaim, *it is an abuſe of language to ſay, that*

* Page 10.

ſuch a ſtate poſſeſſes Liberty. And that rather than be governed in ſuch a manner, it would perhaps be better to be governed by the will of One Man without any repreſentation.

The fact in our hiſtory, I believe, is, that there never entered into the head of any perſon able to bring it about, except Oliver Cromwell, the idea of having the people of Great Britain repreſented. Perſons of a certain deſcription were in the way of attending the king in his wars and in his Parliaments. It appears that they conſidered this diſtinction rather as a burden than as a privilege. The kings were in uſe to grant exemptions to the officers of their court, and to others. The counties and boroughs that ſent ſubſtitutes were obliged to give them wages; and ſometimes, by the connivance of ſheriffs, eluded the duty altogether. In proceſs of time, however, a place in the King's Court of Parliament became of more conſequence. Deputies became willing to ſerve without wages; boroughs revived their charters. Freeholders embraced their diſtinction as a privilege, and their repreſentatives improved it into a formidable power, which became of the greateſt importance to themſelves and to their country. So little however are mankind commonly aware when they are laying in politics the

the foundation of the beſt ſuperſtructures. The ſpirit of the conſtitution, the deſign of the conſtitution, are the mere conſtructions of ſpeculative men; at leaſt, they only mean the effect of the conſtitution, which, notwithſtanding the diſdain of our Author, has been in many reſpects ſuperior to the effect of any other conſtitution in the known world; and notwithſtanding the high ideas of Liberty with which it is contraſted does actually beſtow upon its ſubjects higher degrees of Liberty than any other people are known to enjoy.

It is known, that under all the defects of the Britiſh Legiſlation, the ſubject enjoys more ſecurity than was ever before enjoyed by any people; and this not accidentally, but by a very natural tendency of the conſtitution, by lodging legiſlation in the hands of perſons intereſted in the juſtice of the laws which they make, and by giving to all the different orders of the ſtate a power to reject or amend every law that is likely to be grievous on themſelves. It is leſs material who elects, than it is who may be elected. For ſo long as no one can be elected without the qualifications of a Britiſh commoner, the intereſts of the Commons in the lower houſe is ſecure.

The experience of Europe, Aſia, and Africa, ſhould convince Dr. Price, that it is not better to be governed by one man than by ſuch a repreſentation: but this haſty expreſſion of the Doctor, ſhows the danger of going ſo faſt in ſearch of ideal perfection, which is apt to make us deſpiſe what is attainable and obtained, for the ſake of ſomething impracticable, and ſometimes abſurd.

It is of great moment to extend the participation of power and government, as far as the circumſtances and character of a people will permit; but extremely dangerous to confound this advantage with Civil or Political Liberty; for it may often happen, that to extend the participation of power, is to deſtroy Liberty. When all the powers of the Roman ſenate were tranſferred to the popular aſſemblies, the Liberty of Rome *came to an end.*

In general, to be free, is to be guided by one's own will; but licentiouſneſs is its oppoſite *.

Dr. Price ſeems to forget his own definition of Liberty, and admits the reſtraint of crimes as neceſſary to it: nay, admits that Liberty is

* P. 11, 12.

not

not leſs infringed when the licentious multitude do what they pleaſe, than it is when a ſingle perſon does ſo; although he ſeems to think, and perhaps juſtly, that the former infringement is the moſt repairable and the leaſt pernicious of the two, p. 14.

Dr. Price has very juſtly obſerved, that the imputation of omnipotence to any government, except that of the ſtrongeſt, the moſt numerous, or the greateſt force, is abſurd; and that even force cannot always ſecure obedience. It muſt be ſatisfied with the alternative of obedience, of tortures, or of death. Government, whatever be its origin, muſt employ various engines, of which force is but one; authority, reſpect, public confidence, perſuaſion, are the principal engines to be employed with the body of a well-meaning and innocent people: force is the engine to be employed againſt criminals and ſlaves. And the government of mere force, in every inſtance, either finds people ſlaves, or makes them ſo.

It is abſurd to ſay, as ſome writers have ſaid in the courſe of this paper-war, that there muſt be in every ſtate one ſupreme uncontrolable power; for this never yet exiſted in any ſtate whatever. The deſpotic Prince, in ſearch of ſuch

ſuch a power, finds, that he changes the control of aſſemblies, councils, civil departments, or of men of education and virtue only, to come under the control of Serjeants and Corporals. In our government, King, Lords, and Commons are not one power, but three collateral powers; any one of which may ſtop the motions of all the reſt. This obſervation, however, takes nothing from the authority of their joint acts wherever they concur, nor had any one till now, from the extreme ſettlements of Britiſh ſubjects in the old world, to their utmoſt migrations in the new, doubted the validity of any ſuch act. Dr. Price ſeems to regret that the efforts formerly made by our fathers in behalf of Liberty are no longer repeated; he ſhould likewiſe regret, that our liberties are no longer attacked in the ſame manner as in the times of our fathers. The conteſt between the prerogative of the King and the privilege of Parliament is diſcontinued; the King has influence enough in Parliament to obtain the neceſſary ſupports of his government, though, I hope, never to obtain the ſmalleſt reſignation of the people's right. In the conteſt of our times, the parties are the pretenders to office and the holders of office. A noble conteſt, though an ignoble cauſe. I muſt call it a noble conteſt, as it is undoubtedly one principle of life in our conſtitution. It

leads

leads one party to watch the motions of adminiſtration; and the other to be on their guard becauſe they are watched. As the matter now ſtands, indeed, it is more the intereſt of oppoſition to ſtop the ordinary movement of government, than to prevent its *abuſes*. If they can ſtop the ordinary courſe of government, the miniſter muſt withdraw to make way for themſelves: but in preventing abuſes, they only oblige him to change ill meaſures for good, and by this means to take a firmer hold of his power. I know that many ill conſequences might be imputed to the ſtate of our parties; but I am not for removing any one ſafe-guard to freedom, until we have found a better.

Dr. Price infers from his argument, that no one community can have *any power over the property or legiſlation of another, that is not incorporated with it by a juſt and adequate repreſentation.* P. 19.

In this paſſage, by the word Power, he certainly means the right to have ſuch a power; for it is an undoubted fact, that many ſtates have had the power. Even the admired and happy republics of Swiſſerland and Holland have their ſubject towns and provinces; and this naſcent republic of New England too, if it

acquire the independence which, under the denomination of Liberty is projected for it, may come to have its ſubject towns and provinces, and, among the foremoſt, ſome of thoſe who are now ſo ready to become partners of its revolt againſt the ſtate.

I do not contend for the right to any ſuch power in any actual caſe, but I contend not only for the reality of the power, but for the right likewiſe in ſome ſuppoſable caſes. No writer on the law of nature, that I know of, has denied that ſtates or bodies politic may perform every act that any private party can perform; and if this be admitted, it follows, that they may, either by contract or forfeiture, become tributary or ſubject to another ſtate or body politic, as much as a ſingle man may become the ſervant or debtor of another ſingle man by ſtipulation or forfeiture.

This maxim of the law of nature, I confeſs, does not bind the Americans to contribute to the ſupply of the Britiſh Empire, unleſs it can be ſhewn that they have received all the benefit of ſubjects; and therefore have ſtipulated to perform all the duties of ſubjects, by the ſame tacit convention that binds every inhabitant of Great Britain.

I agree

I agree with the Doctor, that the ſubjection of one ſtate to another is inexpedient, and often calamitous for both; but this will not preclude one member of the ſame ſtate, who has always made common cauſe with another, from having a very juſt claim to expect a joint contribution to the common ſupport.

After what has paſſed between Great Britain and her Colonies, whoever pretends that Great Britain ſhould drop every claim of a return, and the Colonies refuſe to make any return, under every poſſible ſecurity to their property, muſt have very high notions of the generoſity incumbent on the one party, and as low notions of what is incumbent on the other. Nay, but they have traded with us, and this is enough: and have not we traded with them? Have they given us their goods for nothing? Or have they been careful to receive value? Or have they taken leſs value than other nations would have taken? Theſe queſtions ſhould be anſwered before we are told that their trade has repaid us for all the blood and treaſure we have expended in the common cauſe, and before it can be admitted that in the heights of proſperity, at which they may arrive, they are not bound under any form, or with any precautions, for the remainder of their property, to contribute any

part of it whatever to the common ſupplies of the Empire.

The Doctor owns that one ſtate may become bound to indemnify another for an injury done them, or be bound to give ſecurity againſt future injury; but who can ſet limits to the poſſible rights thus eſtabliſhed in the claim of one ſtate againſt another. It is impoſſible to tell how long a ſtate may be tributary, or how much it may pay before it has acquitted a debt of indemnification; or what precaution may be neceſſary to obtain, for the future, a ſufficient ſecurity againſt injuries. The Romans, when they recovered Campania from its revolted inhabitants, and from Hanibal, thought proper, for their own future ſecurity, to aboliſh the Municipal Senate, and aſſemblies of that province: Such meetings they conſidered as a ſtanding conſpiracy againſt themſelves. In this I ſhall not pretend to juſtify their conduct, but ſuppoſitions may be made that would be ſufficient to juſtify it, and ſuch as I ſhall neither be willing to make nor apply to the American Colonies: But let no one contend, that in the plenitude of madneſs, they may not forfeit more to the ſtate, than any one would be willing to exact from them. I will not ſay what an imperious ſtate, like that of the Romans, ſo often

quoted

quoted in a ſimilar caſe, would have exacted and done; but if we are to hope that one party will not inflict the penalty, we may hope likewiſe that the other will not incur it.

Writers on the Law of Nature ſuſtain the validity of a fair contract in all caſes where the performance is poſſible or lawful. That it is both poſſible and lawful for one corporation or body politic to ſubmit themſelves to the laws, and contribute to the ſupplies of another, no one will doubt; that all corporations and bodies politic belonging to the ſame ſtate are actually under ſuch a contract, no body ever queſtioned.

No one can bind himſelf to receive the religious opinions of another, becauſe his opinions are not in his power, but he may bind himſelf, if he pleaſes, to pay a ſhilling in the pound of his eſtate.

But can one generation bind another? No doubt, in every lawful contract, as much as any perſon can bind his heirs, or as much as the late King of France could bind the ſucceſſors to his crown to leave Canada in the poſſeſſion of the Engliſh. The Doctor's reaſoning on this ſubject takes away the obligation of treaties, or at beſt

beſt makes them temporary agreements, to laſt for the lives of thoſe who made them.

It is confeſſed, that favours voluntarily conferred, cannot be ſtated as a ground of debt; but they who reſt ſo much on the affection and attachment of the Colonies to the Mother Country, ought to allow ſomething for the favours done by the Mother Country to her Colonies.

The Doctor attempts a diſtinction between the ſeparation of parts in the ſame kingdom, and the ſeparation of parts in the ſame empire, which I confeſs I cannot comprehend; but if he lays ſo great a ſtreſs on the difference of names, he may be told, that Great Britain and its dependencies is not an Empire, but a kingdom. I ſee no warrantable part for mankind to act under either denomination, but to acquieſce in the government which Providence has given to their kingdom or their empire, until they are ſure that they do not change it for the worſe; and in this, reformers upon general principle, however ſanguine, are far from being ſecure.

It is the faſhion, however, I obſerve, with ſome writers, to give high expectations of the great perfection to which human nature is tending, eſpecially in America; for I think Old England,

England, by their account, is degenerating. But a republic extending 1200 miles in one direction, and without any known bounds in the other, is ſtill an experiment to be made in the hiſtory of mankind. Our anceſtors made the experiment in vain, within narrower limits; they too had high expectations of what mankind were about to exhibit; they thought the millennium and the kingdom of Chriſt were at hand, but they found, in their ſtead, the iron reign of an uſurper, ſupported by military force. It is charity, perhaps, to pray that if the Colonies muſt break with us for ever, they may be more faithfully ſerved by thoſe they employ, than they themſelves have ſerved their country. The officer, perhaps, has not yet appeared, who, on that emergency, is to diſmiſs the Congreſs as Cromwell did the Parliament. But what title have they to hope for an exemption from the too common fate of mankind; the fate that has ever attended Democracies attempted on too large a ſcale; that of plunging at once into military government? The armies they form againſt their country will need no other title to become their maſters. It is even fair to conclude, from the hiſtory of the world, that there is no time of more danger than thoſe times of ſanguine, of florid, and enthuſiaſtic expectation,

in which mankind are bent on great and hazardous change.

Americans, however, may ſtill be thought out of this queſtion; they ſeek no innovation; they are the parties that contend for the ancient eſtabliſhment. Their plea, however, I hope is better founded than this *. The Parliament of Great Britain has made laws for the Colonies from their firſt eſtabliſhments. The charters of the Colonies ſubjected them to taxes, and they have been taxed by acts of the Britiſh Parliament: Matters therefore were in their ordinary train, when the Americans ſtopt ſhort, and would proceed no farther. I will not, however, inſiſt, that the change of circumſtances may not have required a change of policy; and that, as the Americans are growing rich, and have ſomething that tempts rapacity, they ought to have better ſecurity for their property, than the continuance of former practice will perhaps beſtow. But, in this view of the conteſt, what is to be done if the Colonies have a right to contend for new ſecurities? Let them apply to the ſtate with proper profeſſions of duty, and repreſentations of the dangers they apprehended; but no one

* See the Rights of Great Britain aſſerted againſt the Claims of America.

can pretend that the ſtate ought to yield up the ordinary way of conſtituting a revenue, till a new and better way is ſubſtituted in its place.

The Doctor refers to the example of the Romans, and bids us conſider how much they ſuffered for having been the tyrants of other nations, and I ſhall never recommend to any ſtate to follow their example.

Dr. Price * has deduced, from our leading principle, viz. *that every reſtraint on the will of man is an introduction of ſlavery*, a number of conſequences that ſeem to him incapable of being diſputed. There is, indeed, nothing that requires to be diſputed, but his principle itſelf, for with that, the conſequences muſt fall. Its application, as he obſerves, to the preſent queſtion with America, is obvious; and the principle indeed ſeems to be made for the application, and is fitted to juſtify the deſire of national independence, under the name of Civil Liberty. The change of words has a mighty effect, even in the frame of an argument. There is not an Engliſh gentleman, I believe, that would not ſhrink from the thought of reducing millions of his fellow-ſubjects to a ſtate of ſervitude, and as few that will not be ſeized with indignation in

* Part II. p. 31.

being told that the Colonies aim at independence, and will contribute no longer to the joint ſupport of their common country.

We ſhall be told, however, that the Colonies do not aim at independence.—Yes, if they aim at the Liberty deſigned for them by Dr. Price. If they aim only at ſecurity to their rights and properties, let the queſtion be fairly ſtated, and put in the train of pacific diſcuſſion.

The Doctor is pleaſed to ſay, that the queſtion of right, with all liberal inquirers, ought to be; not what juriſdiction over them, precedents, ſtatutes, and charters give, but what reaſon and equity, and the rights of humanity give: This, he ſays, *in truth, is a queſtion which no kingdom has ever had occaſion to agitate.* It is certainly the firſt time it ever was propoſed that men having any political eſtabliſhments, ſtatutes, precedents, or charters, ſhould at once demoliſh, cancel, or ſet aſide all the maxims, records, or conventions on which every party muſt rely for the preſervation of his property, and from which alone he can learn the relation in which he ſtands to the ſtate, or to his fellow-ſubjects. Why has no kingdom ever had occaſion to agitate ſuch a queſtion? Have no parties aroſe in politics before? Have no diſtricts or corporations of the ſame community claimed privileges and exemptions

exemptions that have been diſputed with them? It is well known that ſuch queſtions have been agitated, and that parties uniformly referred to precedents, ſtatutes, and charters for a determination. To bring queſtions of this ſort to any ſuppoſed tribunal of reaſon, of equity, and humanity, is to ſet human affairs afloat upon the ſea of opinion and private intereſt, and to deprive men of thoſe charts, landmarks, and rules of ſailing, by which they were in uſe to be guided, and to direct their cauſe.

It is certainly true, that no nation ever planted Colonies with ſo liberal or ſo noble a hand as England has done. But ſhe has done ſo on the plan of thoſe very charters, ſtatutes, and precedents which are now to be ſet aſide. And her having done ſo much for her Colonies, is ſurely an unfavourable topic from which to infer the right of her Colonies to do nothing for her. It is indeed to be lamented, that, in the place of argument, this controverſy is haſtening to employ the ſword. Bleſſed were he that could bring it to a different iſſue. But I hope, that neither the Americans, nor the advocates that plead for them, will think, that every conceſſion ſhould come from Great Britain. They have hitherto ſaid to the King of Great Britain, on his own territory, as the Romans ſaid to

Pyrrhus and to Hannibal, " You muſt evacuate " this land before we will treat;" and if this were granted them, it is likely they would be ready to declare what further conceſſions they expect from the Crown and Legiſlature of their country.

The Doctor * propoſes to determine the juſtice of the war by the object of it; and this he collects from a ſtatute moved and carried in Parliament, under the auſpices of a noble Lord, and of honourable gentlemen, who are the declared friends of America, and in whoſe intentions the Americans repoſe ſuch confidence, that they have never once, as I have been told, complained of this declaratory law. From this ſtate of the caſe; that is, from the ſilence of America on this law, and from the friendly intentions towards America of thoſe who obtained it; I am inclined to think, that this law cannot be the ground of the quarrel. I rather ſuſpect, that we are going to war about taxation and property, than about ſpeculative declarations of right; and that one party is very indifferent about laws that are to bring them nothing, and others about laws that are to take nothing from them. And on this ſuppoſition I

* Part II. Sect. i. Page 34.

ſhould

ſhould think, the fair way of determining the juſtice of the claim, would be by ſtating two queſtions. The firſt, Whether the charters, ſtatutes, and precedents; that is to ſay, whether the preſent conſtitution of Great Britain reſpecting her Colonies; has committed a power of Taxation over America, to the legiſlature of Great Britain. If this queſtion ſhall be decided in the affirmative, as I am perſuaded it muſt be ſo decided, it will follow, that the Legiſlature of Great Britain has yet incurred no blame in urging a claim in which they were juſtified by the conſtitution of the ſtate.

I however moſt willingly admit a ſecond queſtion. Has the ſituation of affairs undergone any change that require a change of policy and of meaſures, that deſerve the attention of the Legiſlature, and on which the Colonies ought to be heard with candour and patience, ſo as to avoid, if poſſible, inconveniencies to which, in a new ſituation, old precedents, and even ſtatutes and charters might carry us?

The principal changes in our circumſtances are, that our Colonies, under the influence of charters and ſtatutes, have increaſed in reſources and in people: that Great Britain is heavily burdened, and that now, from being at an ordinary

dinary expence in nurſing and protecting her Colonies, ſhe would gladly draw ſome ſhare of the public ſupplies from thence. This ſituation, I confeſs, is new, and may require ſome ſuitable policy. If the Parliament of Great Britain, as formerly, be to grant the money of the Americans; the latter may think their property not ſecure. At the ſame time, if any party independent of the Parliament of Great Britain be to grant money to the Crown; this conſtitution loſes one of its principal ſecurities, the dependence of the Crown for ſupplies on the Commons of Great Britain.

Here is a difficulty, on which it is not ſurpriſing that parties ſhould differ, and inadvertently get into a very hearty quarrel, in which both may ſuffer extremely before any one is able to find a ſolution.

In ſtating the queſtion, I have paſſed over many things which other perſons may think of great conſequence, in order to come at what I apprehend every one will think ſo.

I do not write in order to perſuade my correſpondent, that the Legiſlature of Great Britain ſhould retain their unlimited power of granting the money of America. But I write under a

deep conviction, that the Americans ought to contribute to the ſupplies of the empire. And that they ought now, before an indemnity is granted for the paſt, to ſpecify the taxes on which they will eſtabliſh a revenue for the ſtate, and which, without augmenting the burden on them, may increaſe with their reſources their population and the immunities given to their trade; but ſubject to no other alteration, without the conſent of Parliament and their own. Or if they chooſe rather to pay ſome fixed proportion of what the Commons of Great Britain from time to time levy on themſelves, let them have it in the mode which they themſelves, or better judgments than mine, can determine.

They have been told, that the Parliament of Great Britain will not tax them, if they are pleaſed to tax themſelves. No ſpecific tax, no ſpecific ſum has been mentioned to them; and yet this propoſition, coming from the Commons of Great Britain, has, by themſelves and by their advocates on this ſide the water, been termed an inſult. The plain Engliſh, I am afraid, is, that the Americans do not think any ſupply from thence due to the ſtate of Great Britain. Or, that their advocates do not think they ought to grant any ſuch ſupply till they themſelves are in power. The Americans may

flatter

flatter themſelves, that if the party that now oppoſes Government, were in power, they would obtain every favour and every conceſſion. But they may be aſſured, that no Miniſter in the councils of the King will ſurrender the undoubted right of this country, to require from America ſome ſhare in the ſupplies which are neceſſary to ſupport the the Imperial Crown and the Empire of Great Britain. If precautions be wanting to ſecure the rights of that people in the mode of attaining this neceſſary end, the parties may ſtill have an opportunity of entering into a candid and fair diſcuſſion of this ſubject. Commiſſioners are ſoon to be appointed by the King, who are to accompany his fleets and armies acroſs the Atlantic, doubtleſs with the humane and merciful intention to ſpare, by pacific means, if that is yet poſſible, the effuſion of blood.

In this light the Colonies ought certainly to conſider this lenient meaſure. And if they do, I think they ought to be ready on their part, to meet the advances of the King with dutiful repreſentations of the ſecurities they deem neceſſary in the future adminiſtration of government reſpecting them.—If no ſuch ſtep is taken, we may fairly conclude, that they are intoxicated with the idea of ſeparation and independence, and that they are reſolved

ſolved not to grant ſupplies in any mode or in any proportion whatever. And if this be their reſolution, I am afraid the ſword muſt ſtrike as well as be raiſed; and till they exculpate themſelves from the deſign of withdrawing their allegiance, and every reaſonable mode of ſupply from the Crown of Great-Britain, the wounds they receive will appear to come from the hand of Juſtice, and will remain unpitied by many perſons, who are far from wiſhing to invade their liberties.

It is likely that the councils of the King will incur more cenſure for the reluctance with which they have armed the kingdom againſt this revolt, than they will for any ſuppoſed precipitation in urging matters to extremities. But it is a noble error to have been ſlow in believing that Britiſh ſubjects, unmoleſted in their religion or in their liberties, ſtill in poſſeſſion of that government by which they had arrived at ſo much proſperity, untouched in their property by any unprecedented invaſion; and if aſſailed, only aſſailed by penal ſtatutes, to make compenſation for an outrage done to the property and the trade of their fellow-ſubjects: It was, I ſay, a noble error to be ſlow in believing that Britiſh ſubjects, under this deſcription, would have drawn upon themſelves and this nation all the horrors of a civil war. If we were taught to think them puſilanimous, they were certainly

taught to think our councils irreſolute, diſtracted, and unſtable; but both, I hope, will return from their errors, and exchange the ſword for a more rational mode of arbitration.

Dr. Price, being to conſider the juſtice of the war, recites all the pleas that may be offered by the ſtate in ſupport of coercive meaſures. Thoſe pleas he ſuppoſes to be, *The neceſſity of war to preſerve the unity of the empire: our ſuperiority: our pretenſions as the parent ſtate: the return due for our benefits: our ſovereignty in the territory of America.* The Doctor will own, that union is at leaſt a deſirable object, and will pardon our endeavours to preſerve it, by the ſame means that ſtates, the moſt moderate, have employed for this purpoſe; the policy of a common intereſt, a common ſenſe of duty, and the authority of a common government. If any one contend, that we ought to rely on either of the former principles to the excluſion of the latter, and that we ought to reſign either the authority or the force which government on occaſion muſt exert, I ſhould ſuſpect that he does not wiſh to have us united, nor even to leave us poſſeſſed of the common reſources for the preſervation of peace and good order, that all nations have employed within their dependencies.

I mean

I mean not to argue from the ſecond topic. Nations do not found obligations of allegiance and duty on difference of wealth, numbers of people, or the ſuppoſed precedency of ſcholars and learned men. I hope the remaining title, however, will not be ſo ſlightly treated. The name of Parent State is not an empty ſound. It carries the authority by which civil rights are eſtabliſhed and modified. If America derive nothing from this authority, why did its ſettlers take any charters from the crown of Great-Britain? Or if they were emancipated by theſe charters, why is not their emancipation expreſſed in ſome ſuch terms as the following? *Whereas certain perſons mean to depart this our kingdom and form ſtates apart, we hereby emancipate ſuch perſons, diſcharge their allegiance to us, and diſcontinue our protection.* If, on the contrary, they took poſſeſſion of their ſettlements by grants of the Crown, if they have been uniformly conſidered as Britiſh ſubjects, amenable to the law and under the protection of the ſtate, what title have they now to withdraw their allegiance becauſe their ſettlements were made in America, any more than if they had been on Hounſlow-Heath or on Finchley-Common? The charters, the precedents, the ſtatutes on which this right of the ſtate is founded, can no more be diſputed than the charters, precedents,

and ſtatutes on which the conſtitution of the ſtate, reſpecting any other part of its power, is eſtabliſhed. The utmoſt any party can plead is, that circumſtances are changed, and require a new ſyſtem of policy, or at leaſt ſome additional precautions, to give to the Britiſh ſubjects of America the ſame ſecurity, or a ſecurity as nearly as poſſible the ſame, with that which is enjoyed by their fellow-ſubjects at home.

Exaction of gratitude is but an ungracious plea; the fact is, that the ſtate protected and encouraged that part of her ſubjects on the ſame mixed motives of political intereſt and affection, that ſhe protects and encourages every other member of the community, and there is no other member that has not an equal title to reject the claim of gratitude. It may again be repeated, that conſidering what has paſſed between Great Britain and her Colonies, the Americans will be found to act an odious part in this conteſt; they are not ſatisfied with the enjoyment of their municipal governments, and ſuch a mode of contributing to the ſupplies of the empire, as may be conſiſtent with the ſafety of their perſons and their properties.

The ſovereignty of a territory, and the property of its land, every where admits of a diſtinction,

tinction. The ſtate is undoubtedly ſovereign of all the territory on which any of her ſubjects, under her protection, and by her charters and grants, have made any ſettlements; and the territory of North America was, and is ſubject to all the claims of ſovereignty under the limitation of ſtatutes and charters. I write from memory, but appeal to the original deeds, whether ſome of them did not give an exemption from Taxation during a limited time, with an evident implication, that at the expiration of that term they ſhould be ſubject to taxation like other Britiſh ſubjects. And whether others did not limit taxation to ſpecific duties, mentioned with a like implication, that the right of taxation was entire while the exerciſe of that right was reſtricted.

But Dr. Price is willing to plead *, that the Colonies did ſettle under the faith of charters, and we muſt admit, that they have a right to all the immunities and exemptions granted them by ſtatute, or by charter under the authority of ſtatute; but let not their advocates plead the authority of charters in one page and reject them in the next. It is certain, that the Colonies were planted on the authority of law, and

* P. 40.

never

never aſpired to eſtabliſh their privilege on a higher baſe. It is likewiſe probable, that all of them, at their firſt ſettlement, would have embraced, as an ample ſecurity of their property, an exemption from every burden beſides that of parliamentary taxation. How far this ſecurity may now be deemed ſufficient, I am willing to leave as a ſubject of better and more able diſcuſſion.

The remainder of Dr. Price's obſervations on the juſtice of the war tend to prove, that the paſt or preſent ſtate of the conſtitution reſpecting the Colonies, is not preciſely what it ought to be in the preſent ſtate of the empire, nor ſuch as it ought to be in the event of farther changes, of which he has ſtated the poſſible contingency; and in this I do not pretend to decide, but hope that perſons better qualified will bring it to proper trial, not of force, but of political expediency and national wiſdom.

Dr. Price, in the 2d Section of the 2d Part of his Pamphlet, in which he inquires, *whether the war with America is juſtified by the principles of the conſtitution*, affects to conſider the Americans as a ſeparate people; and inquires, *whether the war be made to eſtabliſh our conſtitution among them.* If this queſtion has any meaning at all,

I apprehend it ſhould ſtand, Whether, by the preſent conſtitution of the ſtate, the Legiſlature of Great Britain is in poſſeſſion of a right to impoſe taxes and to enact laws binding in America? If they be in poſſeſſion of ſuch a right, have they been known to abuſe it? They have been in poſſeſſion of the right, and ſcarcely at all exerted it. But the Americans are now alarmed, and think that this right may be abuſed; let them come forward, therefore, and urge the precautions neceſſary to be taken againſt this abuſe. If they will accept of no ſecurity below that of independency, and total ſeparation of commonwealth; this, I apprehend, they muſt acquire at the point of the ſword. But other and better remedies for the evil may yet be expected from the councils of a ſtate that has been as remarkable for moderation, as for reſolution in the conduct of great affairs.

Advocates in this cauſe perpetually quote the ſpirit and principles of the Britiſh conſtitution againſt the letter and the fact. Do they mean its primæval ſtate, the intention of its founder, or ſomething elſe, that they fancy concerning it? Its primæval ſtate is very little known; and if it were, could not be admitted as the rule of proceeding in oppoſition to ſubſequent eſtabliſhments and compacts. In that ſtage which is

called

called the feudal conſtitution, the King had his domain or royal eſtate, and had no other claim on his ſubjects but their perſonal ſervices in his wars. When he wanted ſome extraordinary ſupply, he ſummoned his vaſſals together, and made his propoſition to them for that purpoſe; they deliberated and refuſed, or granted ſometimes in commutation for military ſervices, and ſomtimes as a voluntary gift. The Conſtitution was gradually raiſed upon theſe foundations. The Parliament became what it is, and the ſtate in poſſeſſion of a maxim, that the King can raiſe no ſupplies without conſent of Parliament. This is the origin, and this is the fact in our conſtitution; and right or wrong, till within theſe few years, or few months, within the Britiſh territory of Europe, Aſia, Africa, and America, Parliament was ſuppoſed omnipotent and irreſiſtible: what change may now be made to accommodate forms to new ſituations, I hope may ſtill be determined by a better deciſion than that of the ſword. But, till that is determined, I hope, that every good ſubject will pay a proper reſpect to the fact, and the letter of the conſtitution, whatever fancy he may have about the ſpirit of it. We may wiſh for improvements in the laws of the ſtate, but till theſe are made, we muſt abide by the law as it ſtands.

In the next Section *, Dr. Price brings in queſtion the policy of the war with America. There is, in fact, no apology can be made for any war, beſides the neceſſity of it to maintain ſome right, and ſome right that is worth contending for at this expence. Whether Great Britain has any ſuch right now at ſtake, and by what ſteps this right came to be brought in hazard, are two ſeparate queſtions.

I muſt maintain, that until our union is legally diſſolved, the American Colonies are a part of the Britiſh empire. That acts of ſovereignty, from which Great Britain might, or did derive, material advantage, were exerted by the legiſlature of Great Britain. That the act of navigation, the acts limiting trade, the appointment of governors and other civil officers, the eſtabliſhment of a revenue, however inconſiderable, were all of them acts of ſovereignty, in which the ſtate and people of Great Britain are deeply intereſted. That the intereſt of Great Britain, conſtituted by theſe acts of ſovereignty, is now in imminent hazard; and in all human probability, to be ſecured by that force alone with which the ſtate ſhall appear to be armed in ſupport of its own rights. So much has been ſaid

* P. 50.

for the Americans in this country, and they have met with ſo little control in their own, that their pretenſions are likely to riſe. If they prevail by force in reducing the power of legiſlation, will they not take the ſame opportunity to reduce the navigation act, and other every right of ſovereignty? What is to hinder their proceeding to aſſume that independency, which is ſo roundly preſcribed to them under the denomination of Liberty? Are they not getting faſt into a ſituation, in which the ſovereignty of the Crown is likely to become as odious, at leaſt to their leaders, as the power of the Legiſlature itſelf? One man is brought from behind the counter, to be member of a ſovereign Congreſs; another to be one of five that wield the executive power of a great empire: others are promoted proportionally, though to inferior ſtations; and may entertain hopes of riſing to the higheſt: one man is raiſed from a dealer in horſes to be a general, another from a barber to be a colonel; all of them, I make no doubt, well qualified for the ſtations they fill: but whether they be or no, likely to be fond of their dignities, and unwilling to part with them; ready to employ all their authority, all their credit, all the force they can command to prevent the return of peace, which muſt bring the downfal of their power, and ſend them again to their

their trades and their obſcurity; what but a proper force, and a proper aſpect of determination, on the part of Great Britain, can bring ſuch perſons as theſe to reaſon, or deliver out of their hands the bulk of the ſober and the induſtrious people of America? who, ſeeing their properties and their peace at ſtake, will be glad to return to the boſom of the ſtate, and be happy to receive ſuch ſatisfaction on the future ſecurity of their property and civil rights, as I hope no generous or candid mind can ever entertain any idea of refuſing them.

Men are indeed, as Dr. Price obſerves, too apt to be governed by the luſt of power, by revenge, and by other deteſtable paſſions. But are theſe paſſions unknown in America? Have the leaders in this revolt no ambition, no revenge to gratify, or would it be prudent in any adminiſtration to truſt to the moderation and candor of parties, who have ſoared already ſo high above the condition of ſubjects, and who have ſuch an intereſt in perpetuating a breach to which they owe ſo much perſonal conſequence?

It may be confeſſed, that as matters now ſtand, the Americans are not likely to acknowledge the moſt evident rights of Great Britain, farther than thoſe rights are ſupported by force.

But it will be aſked, How came we into this ſituation? Is not the war, though neceſſary now, the ſequel of many unneceſſary ſteps, that being diſcontinued in time, would have prevented it entirely? It may be ſo, and ſo have been the greater number of wars that have afflicted mankind. Diſputes ariſe, provocations become reciprocal, and evils accumulate. The beginnings are admitted, becauſe no body perceives the end; and every fool is a wiſe man after the event has ſhown him what was coming.

I am willing to own, that Dr. Price is inclined to cenſure meaſures, rather than to ſtrike at men. That for this purpoſe he recals to our memory, the policy of many years, fraught with inſtruction to thoſe who are now to act on the ſcene of public affairs. He predicts, though I hope raſhly, the loſs of America; and to make us ſenſible how much we are to loſe, he paints in the moſt favourable colours, the happy ſtate at which that country at the beginning of theſe hoſtilities had arrived, and the growing importance of its trade to Great Britain. I hope, however, it will be remembered, that the Colonies arrived at this happy ſtate under the influence of Britiſh policy, and under the undiſputed right of the Britiſh Legiſlature to bind them in all caſes whatſoever: and as we have ſo long proſpered together, under this

this policy; that the Doctor's prediction may ſtill prove falſe; that a moderate ſhare of public ſpirit and good intention, on that ſide of the water as well as on this, may ſtill ſave to all parties their reciprocal advantages, without incurring the inconvenience that either apprehends. But for this purpoſe, as we are perpetually alarmed with the hundreds of thouſands that the Americans can arm, I am afraid that Britain muſt not come to the conference unarmed, or in a ſt to be inſulted.

I write in every page on the ſuppoſition that negociation may take place; and who, but infernal ſpirits, would ever go to war with any other intention than to obtain an equitable peace. The party on whoſe ſide the averſion to treaty lies, will be anſwerable for the conſequence.

As for the trade of America, I am ready to allow it as high as the advocates of America are pleaſed to make it. Be it granted that we ſold them our goods at our own price; but unleſs this price was a higher than we received from other markets, unleſs it was better paid, I do not ſee why this trade is preferable to any other vent for our commodities. Even if the price were higher, which I am told it was not, the ſlow

returns of this market rendered it leſs profitable than many others we have had and ſtill may have.

But have the Americans a right to withdraw their trade from our merchants and manufacturers, as well as their ſupplies from the ſtate? If they have not, why ſhould it be ſuppoſed that they mean to carry the lines of ſeparation beyond the bounds which they themſelves, and their advocates, affect to preſcribe. Trade is the child of intereſt, and will follow where its parent leads. But the right of ſovereignty muſt be maintained by authority, and ſometimes by force. The ſubjects of Great Britain do not claim a right of ſovereignty, neither in Europe nor in America; but they expect from each other, and from the Americans, the reaſonable co-operation of fellow-ſubjects; and the ſtate itſelf muſt maintain its ſovereignty in both. If any part of the monarchy withdraw its allegiance, the remainder muſt repel ſuch an inſult with their blood.

We are, in this argument, threatened with the attacks of enemies from abroad, while we are engaged in a war with our Colonies. But the advocates of America, it is hoped, do not wiſh that the ſtate of Great-Britain ſhould bow the

the head to foreign nations, as well as to her own ſubjects. If our quarrel be momentous and juſt, we muſt ſupport it or periſh, be the enemy who he will. But we have had our wars, and none of our enemies have yet had cauſe to rejoice in the effect of their arms againſt us. I am, however, inclined to believe, that this alarm, as it is injurious to the honour of nations with whom we are at peace on the faith of treaties, ſo it is injurious to their ſagacity, and diſcernment of their own political intereſt. What are they likely to gain by erecting the colonies of North-America into a power independent of Britain? Will their own Colonies become more dutiful after this example of a ſuppoſed ſucceſsful revolt? Or will they have leſs to fear in behalf of their Weſt-India ſettlements, from this riſing confederacy, than they have from Britain? The new enemy will be nearer to thoſe ſettlements, and have many more advantages in ſeizing them, than the old.

Few perſons are qualified to enter the liſts with Dr. Price, on the ſubject of accounts and calculations; but this alone will not enable us, in particular caſes, to decide the great queſtions of national right. Paper-currency and public debt are the conſequences of a fortunate conſtitution, and of an unlimited credit both public and

and private. They have given us the advantage in many a conteſt to forces ſuperior to our own; and the evil, though great, by our Author's account, is ſuſceptible of a cure. It is probably in order to urge this cure, that the deſperate ſtate of the patient is ſo much explored. Such admonitions go home to Miniſters of State, who can verify or diſprove the facts, and will not be ſhaken by falſe allegations. The people, however, are in more danger, and in the moſt flouriſhing time of the Public, may ſuffer as much from a falſe alarm of bankruptcy, as they could from a real one. A falſe and wanton alarm of fire, in a crowded theatre, has coſt many lives; but they who alarm us ſo loudly on the ſubject of public credit, may have the conſolation to know, that their own accounts are not fully credited, otherwiſe we ſhould have the people of England crowding into every avenue that leads to the Bank, and treading each other to death, with an eager haſte to get forward while any caſh was to be had for their paper.

Moſt people, however, believe, that it is not neceſſary for a great kingdom to have all its riches in caſh; and even the example of the Americans, whoſe advantages Dr. Price is not on the preſent occaſion inclined to decry, will ſerve to prove, that a people, with no better reſource

ſource than a paper circulation, may ruſh into the midſt of alarming convulſions. The Americans have reaſon to believe, that their country will be a ſeat of war, and yet carry on their operations with paper. *Will not the landing of a few troops on their coaſts, inſurrections threatening a revolution of government, or events that produce a general panic, operate in America as they would do in Europe?** And put an end there, as it would any where elſe, to the ſubſiſtence of armies, and to every ſpecies of traffic that depends on the faith of paper, or the credit of a government that ſuppoſes a revolution in order to give it any being.

But if in the preſent conteſt with America our revenue is likely to decline, and if the whole of it be ſcarcely adequate to the difficulties in which we are involved; this does not appear a proper argument to convince us, that we ought not to expect any aid from America; nor is it a very liberal apology for the Americans refuſing to bear any part of the burden, of which a conſiderable part was incurred in their own cauſe. In their cauſe ſingly, if they perſiſt and prevail in gaining that Liberty of independence which is now pointed out to them; but in our

* P. 77.

common cauſe if they continue united with us, and bear a juſt proportion of our burdens.

In ſtating the *honour of the nation as affected by the war with America*, Dr. Price ſuppoſes, that the claims of the ſtate are wrong, and that the reſiſtance of the Colonies is juſt. On this ſuppoſition, the argument is unanſwerably for him; and the conceſſions of juſtice, however late, would, at leaſt to our fellow-ſubjects, be honourable. But this, I humbly conceive, is begging the queſtion. Hitherto the State has proceeded in the tract of precedents, and followed the rules of law and of charters. If a change be expected, the grounds of it ſhould be laid in amicable repreſentation, not in open war and hoſtility. Nations are like private men, they may commit errors, but muſt not ſuffer themſelves to be kicked even into reaſon. When the parties are once armed, a great nation muſt attend to its reputation, as well when it ſheaths as when it employs the ſword. If the Americans refuſe upon any terms, whether in conjunction with, or in ſubordination to the Parliament of Great-Britain, to furniſh any part of the public ſupplies, it is by no means neceſſary, in order to juſtify the uſe of the ſword againſt them, that they invade this iſland. If a perſon refuſe the payment of his juſt debts, he may be compelled

compelled to do right in his own habitation, no leſs than if he had actually entered with violence the houſe of his creditor.

We are ſaid to aſſume as much power over the Americans as either the Genoeſe or the French could aſſume over the Corſicans. The State of Great-Britain had aſſumed nothing but the power of protecting her Colonies, when her conſtitutional powers in America began to be denied, and her authority ſpurned. What has happened ſince is ſurely matter of regret, at leaſt, if not of juſt cenſure, to the warmeſt friends of America. A daring breach of peace and violence to property was committed, and went unpuniſhed. Direct war has been levied in return for penal ſtatutes. And inſtead of reparation to their fellow-citizens for the damage done by the citizens of Boſton, we are told, that they are an independent republic, and no longer accountable to the laws.

We are bid to think of the allies of the Romans in Italy, how they claimed to be enrolled as citizens of Rome; how they fought, and how the ſtate periſhed in the ſtruggle. The claim of thoſe allies was, by every reaſonable perſon, thought to be fraught with diſorder and public ruin. It was ſtrenuouſly oppoſed by the moſt

candid and virtuous citizens of Rome. The multitude of the people, in the place of aſſembly, but too often made a ſcene of confuſion. It was not thought neceſſary to bring an acceſſion of the whole populace of Italy to ſwell the tumult. The event of the war was fatal to Rome; not becauſe the claim of the allies was refuſed, as Dr. Price ſeems to inſinuate, but becauſe it was granted; and the ſequel proved a ſtriking example of what the Doctor does not ſeem to apprehend, that the power of the people is not the good of the people. Their liberty ſunk as their power increaſed, and periſhed at laſt by the very hands that were employed in ſupport of the popular cauſe.

We are bid to conſider* how far we are likely to ſucceed in the preſent war. The reader will pleaſe to obſerve, that ſucceſs in war is a term of uncertain meaning. It may ſtand for the extermination of an enemy on the one hand, or for the moſt equitable terms of peace that can be obtained on the other. If the Doctor means the firſt, I hope that we ſhall not ſucceed. If he means the ſecond, I hope we ſhall ſucceed; and if the Americans be actuated by any thing ſhort of frenzy, they will not reſign

* Section V.

their

their property and their peace, burn their own towns, and fly to the deſert, as the Doctor inſinuates, to avoid embracing us once more as their brethren, and concurring with us upon ſome equitable and ſafe ground, in ſupporting the common cauſe of the ſtate. This I ſhall call victory; and a victory to all the ingenuous and well-informed natives of America, as well as to thoſe of the ſame deſcription in Britain.

Some individuals among them, who meet in Congreſs, or ſtand at the head of armies, as the Lords of America, may think the reunion of the Empire a defeat; but to every one elſe, I hope, it will appear a new æra of proſperity, and glory to the ſtate.

Dr. Price ſuppoſes *, contrary to the leſſon of independence, which, under the denomination of Liberty he has read to the Americans, that they may ſtill be willing to remain in the boſom of the ſtate, and on the ſame bottom with their fellow-ſubjects in Britain: But in what ſenſe, and to what effect, remain on the ſame bottom with us? Will they acknowledge the law of the ſtate, and contribute ſome reaſonable proportion toward its ſupport? Will they be contented with a reaſonable ſecurity, admitted in

* P. 101.

the

the form of granting this ſupply, that it ſhall not be augmented without their own conſent? If ever any ſuch propoſal had come from America, I am perſuaded it might have ſerved as the foundation of friendſhip, and terminated in ſome happy arrangement. But if, by maintaining their union with us, they only mean to continue the practice of calling upon our fleets and armies to defend them when attacked, without contributing any thing to ſupport the power that protects them, I do not ſee what intereſt the ſtate has in this union. Nay, but they are willing to leave us the command of their trade. I confeſs I do not ſee the wiſdom of this policy on the part of America; we are arrived at an age of experience, in which all parties might ſee the expedience of exchanging reſtrictions on trade for compenſations in revenue. If the ſtate were diſpoſed to oppreſs, ſhe might do ſo as effectually by reſtrictions on trade, as by impoſitions of taxes. And I believe, that if the Parliament of Great Britain, in its diſputes with the Crown, had choſen rather to leave the trade of the people at its mercy, than to grant its ſupplies, the Public would have long ſince ſuffered ſeverely by the choice.

I am ſorry that Dr. Price ſhould endeavour to flatter the Americans on a ſuppoſed averſion of

the people of Great Britain to this war, or impute to this circumſtance the ſuppoſed ſlow progreſs made in recruiting the army. The nurſery of the army in this country conſiſts in the ſupernumeraries of our manufacturers, and labouring hands. Had the American leaders, by ſhutting their ports on our traders, diſtreſſed us as they propoſed, recruits for the army would have been but too eaſily found; but as matters now ſtand, our armaments muſt increaſe with their uſual pace. If, to avoid loading the public, by means of new levies, with an enormous half-pay liſt at the end of the war, it is to be opened with a ſupply of foreign troops, I hope it will cloſe with them too; and that in whatever manner the firſt army that goes to America is compoſed, it will ſatisfy the people of that country that peace with Great Britain is better than war.

I am farther ſorry, that Dr. Price ſhould flatter the Americans on the ſubject of their own ſtrength, and of our weakneſs. If the Doctor were pleaſed to recollect a few more of the paſſages of hiſtory, with which he is ſo well acquainted, he would obſerve, that no general, being to invade a country, thought himſelf obliged to have an army in numbers equal to the natives; and that moſt of the unhappy conqueſts

queſts recorded in the hiſtory of mankind were made with ſmall armies, who, having the ſuperiority of diſcipline, made a progreſs the more rapid that their numbers were few: in ſhort, that ſmall armies have done more than I hope the arms of Great Britain will have to do in America; they have reduced, and kept in ſubjection, extenſive countries, repleniſhed with numbers of people, not of the weak and effeminate alone, but of the moſt warlike and fierceſt nations that are known in hiſtory.

The Romans, a little before the ſecond Punic war *, muſtered in Italy ſeven hundred thouſand foot, and ſeventy thouſand horſe; yet this country was invaded by Hannibal with twenty thouſand foot, and ſix thouſand horſe †: The greateſt part of it was reduced, and remained in the hands of this enemy for ſixteen years. With how ſmall an army did Cæſar reduce four hundred independent Certons, and fierce nations in Gaul? With how few did he afterwards invade Italy itſelf, and with how few did he reduce the whole Roman Empire? Were the Saxons that landed in Britain ſuperior to the Britons; the Danes to the Saxons, or the Normans to the Engliſh? On this point, therefore, I ſhould be ſorry to flatter the Americans. The diſtractions

* Polyb. lib. ii. c. 24. † Ibid. lib. iii. c. 60.

that

that ariſe in a country that is invaded, turn the ſuperiority of numbers into diſorder and weakneſs. The Americans have not yet met the Britiſh ſoldiers on the plain, and when they do, their numbers, I imagine, will not avail them much.

I have as high a ſenſe of what men ought, and will do, in defence of their liberties, as any man: But I flatter myſelf, in the preſent caſe, that, unleſs the Americans miſtake independence and ſeparation of commonwealth for Liberty, that they will not think themſelves called upon to try the force of this principle.

I ſhould willingly, with Dr. Price, in the cloſe of his pamphlet, or while he is haſtening to the concluſion *, rejoice in the proſpect of a power growing in America that ſhall aſtoniſh the world. If it were not propoſed to raiſe this power by diſmembering the ſtate of Great Britain, and by ſtripping her of a branch ſhe has nouriſhed with ſo much care, and which by having partaken with her in every national advantage, is now in condition to bear an equitable part in her burdens; and which certainly, on every principle of juſtice, human and divine,

* Page 103.

is not now entitled to ſay, we need you no longer, and will take no father part in your affairs.

I confeſs that I think, when the cauſe of our country is at ſtake, impartiality is but a doubtful virtue. It may be noble to wiſh that our country ſhould do no wrong, and it may be lawful to ſtay her hand when raſhly lifted up againſt the weak and the helpleſs; but when ſwords are drawn, to beat down that of a friend while the enemy is ſtriking, I am afraid, is perfidy.

The Americans, it is true, are not come here to invade us; but they with-hold the rights of Great Britain, and oblige us to invade them, which is a no leſs juſtifiable ground of hoſtility. When citizens of Great Britain anticipate with joy the independent or ſeparate greatneſs of America, it is natural to ſuppoſe, that they think the diſmemberment of this empire will bring us back only to what we were about a century ago; diminiſh our luxury, give a check to many vices, and by landing us down a few ſteps on the ſcale, only renew our endeavours to remount again. This, however, is not of a piece with the hiſtory of mankind; nations in their progreſs, though weak and inferior to

their neighbours, ſpurn their condition, and continue to advance from the bottom to the top of the ſcale. But nations that have been high can ſeldom bear a fall; they ſink in ſthe cale with a retrograde motion as rapid as they advanced. Is Great Britain then to be ſacrificed to America; the whole to a part, and a ſtate which has attained high meaſures of national felicity, for one that is yet only in expectation, and which, by attempting ſuch extravagant plans of Continental Republic, is probably laying the ſeeds of anarchy, of civil wars, and at laſt of a military government, ſo much that, in this great conteſt, Dr. Price might have ventured to ſay, that the friends as well as the enemies of America may not *know what they are doing?*

I am happy to find in the concluſion of this Pamphlet *, that Dr. Price, notwithſtanding the language of independence which he has taught the Americans, is pleaſed to repeat with ſome expreſſions of approbation, a motion for peace, ſuggeſted by a noble Lord, in which the union, dependency, and participation of America in the burdens of the Empire are included as part of the plan. The propoſal does honour to the noble Lord; and if it had actually come from

* Page 103.

America,

Ameriea, I ſhould have thought it an equitable ground upon which to open a council of deliberation with the moſt friendly intentions. I ſhould have prayed that, while the deliberations were open, parties would agree to a ceſſation of arms, and a ſuſpenſion of penal ſtatutes. But I ſee not the uſe of fabricating plans, of which the firſt ſtep always is a conceſſion on the part of the ſtate, without any overture of ſubmiſſion on the part of its ſubjects. Theſe ſubjects have treated plans of the minority with the ſame contempt that they have treated acts of Parliament or reſolutions of the majority, and ſeem to be determined to bring this conteſt to an iſſue more agreeable to the enemies of Great Britain than to its citizens and friends.

P. S. I know not how the tenets of any party may be affected by what I write, but my paper is now in your hands; if you publiſh it, I ſhall become the Author of a Pamphlet; and in that caſe beg of you to remember, that we Pamphlet-writers of every condition miſtake ourſelves for ſtateſmen, and ſo decide and adviſe without reſerve. But that, not being ſingular, you will treat me no worſe than you have done others of the ſame deſcription. Our eſteem with many is fallen; but our conſequence with a warm-hearted and reaſoning people, who like

to

to be conſulted in their own affairs, merits the interpoſition of the beſt informed and beſt intentioned perſons in the kingdom. My ſmall pretenſions being only to a ſhare of the laſt gratification, I hope to meet with ſome indulgence on the firſt. And am,

Your's, &c.

THE END.